ONTARIO MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION

BUSINESS PLAN
2014/15 - 2016/17

Submitted to
The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

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Table of Contents

I. INTRODUCTION 3
II. MANDATE 4
III. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES 5
IV. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN 6
A. External Factors 6
B. Internal Factors 7
V. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 7
VI. STRATEGIC PLAN 8
A. Growing and Communicating Mental Health Knowledge 8
VII. RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT 9
A. Strategic Risk 9
B. Operational Risk 9
C. Legal Risk 9
D. Accountability Risk 9
VIII. HUMAN RESOURCES 10
IX. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/ELECTRONIC DELIVERY PLAN 10
X. INITIATIVES INVOLVING THIRD PARTIES 10
XI. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 11
XII. COMMUNICATION PLAN 11
XIII. FINANCIAL RESOURCES 11
XIV. ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS 13
A. Administration Organization Chart 13
B. Peer Review Organizational Chart 14
XV. STAFF NUMBERS 15
XVI. PERFORMANCE MEASURES 15

I. INTRODUCTION

The Ontario Mental Health Foundation continues, as it has for forty years, to provide support to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's (MOHLTC) efforts to provide high quality and effective services for Ontarians with mild to complex mental illness by providing financial and knowledge dissemination support to Ontario-based researchers in their efforts to understand the causes of mental illness and develop evidence-based interventions for maintaining mental health.

In 2012-13, the Foundation's peer-reviewed Grant and Fellowship programs disbursed nearly $3 million in MOHLTC- and Foundation- derived funds (see Table 1), providing support for 12 new and ongoing research projects and, the Foundation's Fellowship programs provided new and ongoing support for 43 researchers spanning the spectrum from established researchers to student trainees and clinician-scientists.

In 2011, the MOHLTC began implementing Ontario's comprehensive mental health and addictions strategy "Open Minds, Healthy Minds". In support of the new strategy, the Foundation commits to continuing its support for mental health research by exploring opportunities to align funding opportunities with evidence needs of knowledge users and expanding its role as a knowledge translation and exchange broker. In this manner the Foundation will enhance the transmission of Foundation-supported knowledge to practitioners, clients, families, government policy makers, and the public.

Ontario government funding allocations for 2012-13 are as represented in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 (below) summarizes the income and disbursements of the Foundation.

Table 1: Summary: Funds and Disbursements 2012-13*

Item	Funds	Disbursements
MOHLTC Research Allocation	$2,681,168	
OMHF**	$212,030	
MOHLTC Administration Allocation	$432,200	
Foundation Research Grants		$2,025,238
Foundation Fellowship Awards		$867,959
Prizes and Conferences		

* Adapted from "Auditor's Report to the Members of the Foundation and the Provincial Auditor," OMHF Annual Report, 2012-13

** OMHF Funds are the funds that the Board authorized to be used from the Foundation's endowment during that fiscal year. The funding source is from bequests and gifts to the Foundation.

Table 2: Summary: Funding and Disbursements 2011-12

Item	Funds	Disbursements
MOHLTC Research Allocation	$2,681,168	
OMHF*	$215,265	
MOHLTC Administration Allocation	$423,556	
Foundation Research Grants		$1,145,683
Foundation Fellowship Awards		$491,007
Prizes and Conferences		$2,500

* OMHF Funds are the funds that the Board authorized to be used from the Foundation's endowment during that fiscal year. The funding source is from bequests and gifts to the Foundation.

** The Board of the Foundation makes award decisions at its Annual General Meeting. At this writing, the Board has not yet met and, therefore, the award allocations are to be determined.

After experiencing a surge in applications in 2009-2010 (described in Table 3, *infra*), the intense demand for grants and fellowships has not abated.

II. MANDATE

The mandate of the Ontario Mental Foundation is set out in the *Ontario Mental Health Foundation Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. 38 (hereafter, the Act). The Foundation, as an operational service agency of the Government of Ontario, is subject to the governance requirements described within the Treasury Board / Management Board of Cabinet sections of the '*Agency Establishment and Accountability Directive*'. As such, it is considered a Specialized Research Center, with non-competitive ongoing funding from the ministry's Health System Research Fund (HSRF). The Foundation is governed by an appointed Board whose responsibilities are delineated within the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Minister (MOHLTC) and Foundation Chair. The MOU is currently in place until November 19, 2015 and is to be renewed every 5 years.

The Foundation aims to support MOHLTC's goal of ensuring that people with serious mental illness receive evidence-based treatment by directing its resources to:

- Fund research that will improve and enlarge the knowledge necessary to address mental health issues and develop mental health capacity in the Province;
- Develop partnerships with other mental health groups and knowledge users to identify evidence; and,
- Communicate the results of research to the general public, consumers, and families in order to develop a general understanding of mental health and the nature of mental disorders and treatments.

Foundation-supported research is illuminating the causes of mental illness and informing both policy development and clinical practice. The Foundation's success in funding world-class, peer-reviewed, Ontario-relevant mental health research; therefore

contributes substantially to the realization of the goals of Ontario's comprehensive mental health and addictions strategy "Open Minds, Healthy Minds":

- Improve mental health and well-being for all Ontarians;
- Create healthy, resilient, inclusive communities;
- Identify mental health and addictions problems early and intervene;
- Provide timely, high quality, integrated, person-directed health and other human services.

III. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

The Foundation supports Ontario researchers primarily through its annual Grant and Fellowship award competitions. Applications for funding are received via a Foundation-developed, web-based interface which has proven to be an efficient and appreciated means of processing applications. For both programs, eligibility for funding is determined by a committee of scientist peers who rank applications based on their scientific merit and relevance to mental health in Ontario. Applications for Grant funding are limited to $75,000 annually for either two years (Type A) or four years (Type B; release of the final two years of funding is contingent on the demonstration of sufficient progress).

Fellowship awards vary in duration and remuneration in order to provide support to mental health professionals throughout their development as researchers. *Research Studentships* and *Research Training Fellowships* are offered, respectively, for the support of pre-doctoral candidates or those with a professional degree who are pursuing advanced research degrees. *Post-Doctoral Fellowships* provide support for researchers who have attained a Ph.D. *New Investigator Fellowships* are tailored to the varying needs of new faculty: funds can be used as stipends, research operating funds, or as "in lieu funding" to exchange clinical, administrative, or teaching time for research time. *Senior* and *Intermediate Research Fellowships* are unique in that they provide funds to the applicant's department for the purpose of hiring a 'substitute' to assume (in part) the applicant's teaching, clinical or administrative duties. In this manner the Foundation's award allows the applicant greater time to advance their research while encouraging the recruitment of new faculty within the applicant's department.

The Foundation has also provided additional value to the citizens of Ontario. Since 2003 the Foundation has lent its infrastructure capabilities to the support of the MOHLTC's mental health research program by issuing calls for research, processing the grant applications, providing peer review, and financial accounting. The Foundation has also administered research programs for other mental health agencies including the Autism Ontario Research Studentship Program, Schizophrenia Society of Ontario, and the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

The Foundation has always sought to ensure that the work of its scholars is widely disseminated so as to make it available to the professional and lay public. This has been accomplished by providing support for attendance at academic conferences

(Studentship Awards), providing support for 'open access' publication; and supporting conferences and public events which contribute to a broader understanding of mental illness among diverse stakeholder groups.

As described below ('Implementation Plan') the Foundation has established a publicly-accessible electronic library of Foundation-supported research projects and publications. This searchable data-base allows the public, Foundation / government staff and officials, and other researchers to learn of the important research findings derived from Foundation-supported research.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

A. External Factors

As the Foundation's base level of research funding has been held constant over the last 10 years, the proportion of applicants receiving funding ('success rate') declines with each increase in the number of applications. Sustained reductions in the 'success rate' may discourage researchers from developing their careers within mental health research.

Table 3: Number of Applications Submitted To the Foundation by Grant / Fellowship Type

Award	2008 - 09	2009 - 10	2010 - 11	2011 - 12	2012-13	2013-14
Grant	64	78	78	78	50*	56
Studentship	28	43	43	60	40	42
Post-Doctoral	13	23	26	18	17	20
Research Training	5	7	4	3	3	N/A
New Investigator	22	15	23	22	27	14
Intermediate	7	1	5	4	N/A	N/A
Senior	5	4	5	5	N/A	N/A

**The number of grant applications decreased because of difficulties with the Common CV system, administered by CIHR, which the OMHF uses for applications. The problems were fixed by the Fellowship application deadline.*

The Foundation is the foremost funder of early-career mental health research in Ontario (one of the two largest within Canada). The Foundation continues to consider 'early-stage' support to be critical for developing and retaining a vibrant mental health research community. To this end, the Foundation in 2007 increased the number of Studentships available annually from 2 to 7. In 2013-2014, the Foundation further increased the number of funded studentships to 9. The success rate for studentship applicants increased to 21%, which nearly returns the studentship success rate to 2008-2009 levels (25%).

For its part, the Foundation has increased the maximum value of grants from $70,000 to $75,000 per year. To ensure the funding of a consistent number of research grants, the Foundation has increasingly relied on its endowment (Restricted Special Initiatives

Fund) to supplement Ministry-derived funds. Continued use of this fund for this purpose, coupled with a reduced return on investments, will challenge the Foundation's ability to continue this supplement or to sponsor knowledge dissemination events.

The Foundation appreciates the extensive effort required by the applicants to apply for research and fellowship funding. Further, the increase in the number of applications supports the viewpoint that interest in mental health research is increasing and that the Foundation is seen as a critical source of support. Unfortunately, these factors, when coupled with a deceased level of funding, lead to a perception of 'diminishing gains' whereby a sustained effort (applications) is associated with a diminished likelihood of success (funding). Should this perception become entrenched, interest in the pursuit of mental health research careers will be undermined, precipitating a decline in research capacity in this important area.

B. Internal Factors

The workforce of the Foundation is required to demonstrate competence in a wide range of disparate skills (administration, accounting, interaction with key stakeholders), in both English and French. The broad skill set of the Foundation staff has been evidenced in the Foundation's transition from a 'paper-based' to a 'web-based' process of application submission and processing. The present complement of three staff manages these functions in a capable and mutually-dependent manner. Further, knowledge of the historical practices of the Foundation is important for ensuring continuity when deciding current courses of action. For these reasons it is important to minimize staff turnover by offering a competitive compensation and benefits package and to support the maintenance of a good working environment.

V. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

With the combination of experienced OMHF Board members and staff and proven grant review processes and infrastructure, the Foundation is well-placed to deliver on its mandate to support Ontario-based mental health researchers, support capacity building and to enhance its capabilities in the areas of knowledge dissemination of relevant mental health information to practitioners, families and clients, policy makers and developers, and the public.

In the next three years, the Foundation's Grant and Fellowship programs will continue to support Ontario-specific mental health. In particular the Foundation will explore opportunities to align funding opportunities with evidence needs of knowledge users and will look at ways to support the goals of the Open Minds, Healthy Minds strategy and other ministry priorities.

VI. STRATEGIC PLAN

A. Growing and Communicating Mental Health Knowledge

Over the next three years, it is the Foundation's plan to position itself as the key mental health knowledge translation and exchange broker between its funded researchers and the MOHLTC policy and operations staff, mental health practitioners and the public. The Foundation will, additionally, serve as a key resource for mental health research to the Evidence Exchange Net.

In 2014/15

The Foundation will:

- Support 2014/15 research activities to ensure the continued development of mental health research capacity in the Province;
- Explore ways to align funding opportunities with evidence needs of knowledge users;
- Develop an expanded knowledge translation and exchange (KTE) broker role to encourage the uptake of mental health research evidence among policy-makers, service providers, community groups, clients and families.

In 2015/16

The Foundation will:

- Support development of research programs that are responsive to knowledge user needs and ministry priorities such as the Open Minds, Healthy Minds Mental Health and Addictions Strategy Health Links, Transformation Agenda and related ministry priorities;
- Ensure that a proportion of awards focus on research on the mental health of vulnerable populations;
- Actively recruit mental health services clients to serve on the Grants and Fellowship Committees; and
- Focus on increased knowledge dissemination as part of the applications process for all awards.

In 2016/17

The Foundation will:

- Support development of research programs that are responsive to knowledge user needs and ministry priorities such as the Open Minds, Healthy Minds Mental Health and Addictions Strategy Health Links, Transformation Agenda and related ministry priorities
- Further develop collaboration with other mental health research funding agencies, such as the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Boeckh Foundation, Welcome Trust, and National Institute of Mental Health.
- In collaboration with other agencies and institutions, develop educational programs for Ministry staff and citizens of Ontario.

VII. RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

A. Strategic Risk

As discussed above (*Environmental Scan: External Factors*), applications for the Foundation's Grant and Fellowship Awards programs have increased over the past five years. It is anticipated that this pressure will be sustained. While the Foundation will be able to continue to deliver on its mandate of supporting excellent mental health research and researchers, the increased number of applications will create consistent reductions in applicant success rates. There is a risk that fewer researchers will apply for support which in turn will reduce the number of researchers studying mental health and ultimately lead to a loss of research capacity; the Foundation may be required to address this risk by focusing its funding on students, or on other priority areas of research.

There is an infinitesimally small risk that the Foundation would fail entirely to serve its mandate (occurring only if the Foundation failed to receive any funding from the Ministry of Health); in that event, Ontario-based mental health research would be placed in significant jeopardy and the development of best evidence for the diagnosis and treatment of mental illnesses will be drastically curtailed. Further, support for young mental health researchers will virtually evaporate.

B. Operational Risk

The Foundation faces minimal operational risk. It is a very small organization with a stable, knowledgeable, and highly motivated staff. Through continued commitment to operational efficiencies, Foundation has been able to meet the rising demand for its services within the funding allocation for its administrative costs.

C. Legal Risk

The Foundation is insured for all reasonably foreseeable risks associated with the operation of a small charity engaged in the provision of research funding. A certificate of insurance is available and has, on previous occasions, been provided to the Ministry. The legal risks to the Foundation and its operations are negligible. The Foundation does not conduct business which gives rise to legal disputes.

D. Accountability Risk

The OMHF is governed, first, by its establishing statue (Ontario Mental Health Foundation Act R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER O.26) and, second, by the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the MOHLTC which contains the list of OPS polices and directives applicable to the OMHF. The Board of the OMHF monitors

compliance with the terms of both the statute and MOU. MOHLTC also monitors compliance with both instruments.

VIII. HUMAN RESOURCES

The Foundation depends on a small, knowledgeable staff for its administrative functions (See Organizational Chart, infra); the Foundation's human resources are sufficient for meeting ongoing and anticipated funding commitments, and proposed initiatives in the area of knowledge dissemination

The Foundation also depends on volunteers to serve as scientific peer reviewers for its Scientific Committees. The Board of the Foundation is recommended by stakeholders and are approved by the MOHLTC and appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

IX. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/ELECTRONIC DELIVERY PLAN

Over the past three years, the Foundation has shifted from a paper-based application submission and processing system to a fully operational, web-based system. The shift has resulted in significant gains in operational efficiency and a heightened level of client (researcher) satisfaction.

As described above, the Foundation has developed an 'electronic library' as a component of its enhanced knowledge dissemination initiative. An experienced web-development firm has been retained for this purpose; their costs can be met through the present administrative budget through savings from reduced use of paper and postage. Therefore, no additional resources were required for the roll-out of this initiative.

The Foundation also plans an electronic newsletter as a component of its enhanced dissemination plan; the same web-development firm used for the web-based application and reporting system will be engaged for this project. No additional resources are anticipated for the implementation of this project.

X. INITIATIVES INVOLVING THIRD PARTIES

The Foundation will continue to offer its expertise in the administration of peer-reviewed processes to allied mental health agencies operating within Ontario (e.g. Schizophrenia Society of Ontario, Autism Society of Ontario, Evidence Exchange Net) as its resources and Ministerial commitments allow. As this expertise is offered in the context of the Foundation's existing programs, the increment in administrative work load is assumable.

XI. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

As detailed above, adoption of this plan will ensure the Foundation is well-placed to continue its support for excellent mental health research and its proposed initiatives in the area of knowledge dissemination.

With regard to this initiative, the following is already underway:

- The Foundation Board has amended its policies to require public access ("open access") to Foundation-funded research publications, where allowed by copyright considerations.
- The Foundation's website has been programmed to receive, store, and permit searchable public access to electronic research findings.
- Quarterly meetings with Ministry staff on facilitating staff/researcher engagement and identifying opportunities to support MOHLTC mental health priorities are planned in 2014/15.

The Foundation will continue to rely on this consultative process to inform our efforts in the design and implementation of this system.

XII. COMMUNICATION PLAN

For the purpose of enabling its mandate, the research community within Ontario needs to be aware of the Foundation's programs. The longevity of the Foundation coupled with the efforts of university-based researchers and Grant / Research Offices generally ensures that applicable researchers are well informed as to the nature of the Foundation's programs. Further, the dependence of the Foundation on peer reviewers necessitates interaction with a significant and dynamic cross section of the community of Ontario's mental health research community.

As the Foundation's enhanced dissemination strategy matures, we will work within our established networks (academic, governmental, community) to inform clients, families, the public, service providers and government staff about the resources of the Foundation. While still under development, it is anticipated that this strategy will encompass e-mail alerts regarding publications arising from Foundation-supported work, electronic publication of the Foundation's research holdings or where required links to publicly accessible abstract databases, and opportunities for initiating contact with provider agencies and clients. A comprehensive communications plan will be developed in 2014/15.

XIII. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The Research Unit, Planning, Research and Analysis Branch, Health System Strategy and Policy Division, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care provides the Foundation with funding via the Health System Research Fund as a Specialized Research Centre.

The administrative funding costs have risen 1 to 2% in each of the past three years, comparable to the average annual rate of inflation (1.68% per annum, over the last three years: Bank of Canada). The Foundation, through the successful pursuit of operational efficiencies, has been able to meet the rising demand for its services within its existing funding allocation.

Research funding provided by the Research Unit to the Foundation has remained essentially constant over the last ten years managing a slight decrease in 2010. The Foundation has managed to adapt to enhanced demands for support by supplementing Ministry-derived funds with the Foundation's endowment funds (Special Initiatives Fund).

FY 2014/15

Category	Allocation	Disbursements	
Administrative	$423,556	Salary and Benefits:	$307,864
		Rent:	$41,759
		Meetings:	$18,890
		Website:	$5,397
		Other Office**:	$49,646
Grants and Fellowships	$2,681,168	Grants:	$1,608,700
		Fellowships:	$1,072,468

** Other office includes audit fees, insurance, duplicating, telephone and miscellaneous office expenses.

FY 2015/16

Category	Allocation	Disbursements	
Administrative	$423,556	Salary and Benefits*:	$309,403
		Rent:	$42,520
		Meetings:	$20,000
		Website:	$7,000
		Other Office**:	$44,633
Grants and Fellowships	$2,681,168	Grants:	$1,608,700
		Fellowships:	$1,072,468

* Increase related to adjustments to benefits (pension, health); no salary increases.
** Other office includes audit fees, insurance, duplicating, telephone and miscellaneous office expenses.

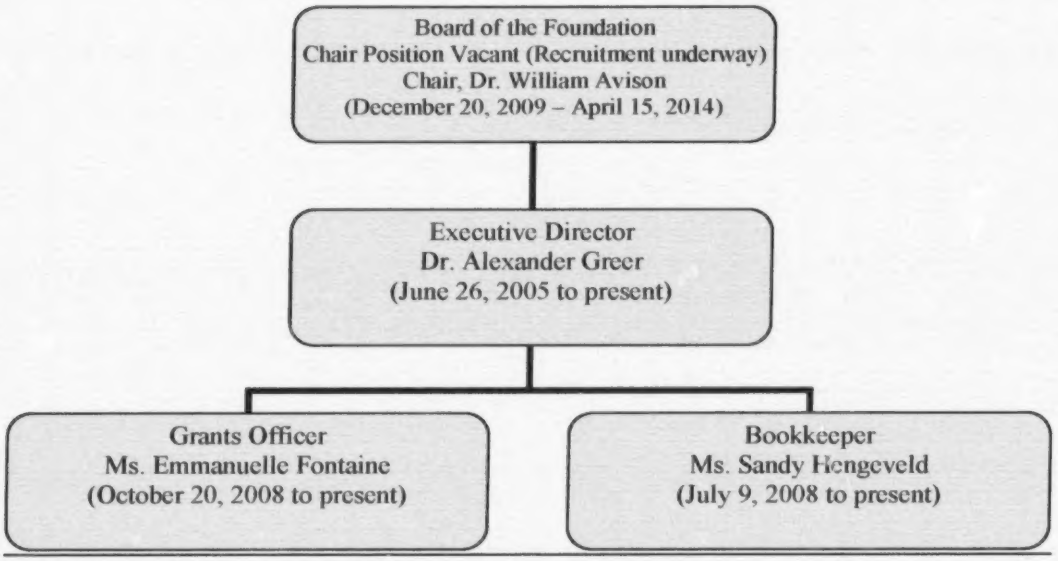
FY 2016/17

Category	Allocation	Disbursements	
Administrative	$423,556	Salary and Benefits*:	$310,950
		Rent:	$43,370
		Meetings:	$20,000
		Website:	$7,000
		Other Office**:	$42,236
Grants and Fellowships	$2,681,168	Grants:	$1,608,700
		Fellowships:	$1,072,468

* Increase related to adjustments benefits (pension, health); no salary increases.
** Other office includes audit fees, insurance, duplicating, telephone and miscellaneous office expenses.

XIV. ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS

A. Administration Organization Chart



The Foundation Board, Board Chair and Vice-Chair, in accordance with the Act and Memorandum of Understanding, are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Minister (MOHLTC). The Board consists of not fewer than seven members; five members represent a quorum for the transaction of business. Presently ten members serve on the Foundation Board representing a diversity of professions (law, academia, business, finance, and clinical practice) and life experiences.

For the purpose of supporting the Foundation's mandate, the Board has organized itself into sub-committees which serve in an advisory capacity to the Chair and Board:

- Executive Committee (composed of the Chair; Vice-Chair; Member-At-Large; and Chair, Audit and Finance Committee);
- Audit and Finance Committee; and
- Ethics Committee (Chaired by the Board Chair).

The Executive Director is:

- Chief administrative officer of the Foundation,
- Responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the Foundation and for ensuring the programs and policies of the Foundation comply with the directives, polices, and procedures of the Treasury Board/Management Board of Cabinet and Ministry of Finance,
- Liaison with the Ministry of Health on all matters, and
- Provides advice to the Board of Directors of the Foundation.

The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors

The Grants Officer is responsible for:

- Processing and vetting (including ethical approvals) of grant and fellowship applications,
- Maintenance of the Foundation's web-site and supporting the Foundation's knowledge transfer initiatives,
- Receipt of progress and final reports from Foundation-funded researchers,
- Liaison to the Fellowships and Grants Peer Review Committees.

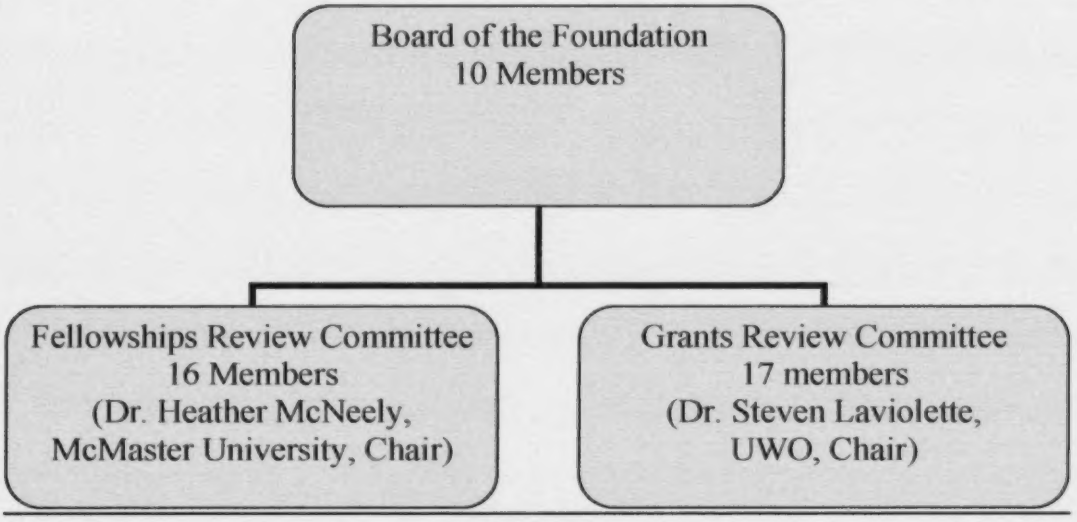
The Grants Officer reports to the Executive Director of the Foundation.

The Bookkeeper is responsible for:

- Financial transactions of the Foundation, including payment for grant and fellowships, the disbursement of administrative funds (rent, web, meeting expenses).
- Preparation of annual financial reports, and
- Assisting the Foundation's auditor in the completion of the statutorily-mandated audited financial statements.

The Bookkeeper reports to the Executive Director of the Foundation.

B. Peer Review Organizational Chart



The Fellowships Review and Grants Review Committees are composed of mental health researchers from a broad range of disciplines. Each Committee reviews the applications submitted to the Foundation for mental health relevance and scientific merit and recommends applications for funding to the Board of the Foundation. The Board, taking into consideration the recommendations of the Committees and the financial

resources available, determines the number of recommended applications which are fundable.

The Research and Fellowship Committees, as represented by their respective Chairs, also advises the Board on matters pertaining to Foundation application processes and policies. The Executive Director, Grants Officer, and Bookkeeper serve as liaisons and advisers to the Committees.

XV. STAFF NUMBERS

The Foundation employs three full time staff (FTE = 3).

XVI. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The mandate of the Foundation is to support the professional development of researchers and fund excellent mental health research within Ontario. Performance measures which extend from this mandate relate primarily to the number of published works arising, in whole or in part, where Foundation funding (Grant or Fellowship) was a contributory factor.

The Foundation is also committed to completing the annual Productivity/Impact Analysis survey sent out by the Research Unit every year.

Quantitative Performance Measures;

The following retrospective information is provided:

Year to Date	Manuscripts (peer reviewed)	Meeting Abstracts	Book Chapters	Books
2008	258	288	24	3
2009	311	214	35	2
2010	116	108	21	2
2011	129	104	20	3
2012	16	8	2	0

Academic research is an inherently complex process: measurement of productivity by assessing the number of published works fails to account for the differences in journal prestige and the level of interest engendered by a work within the scientific community. Journal 'impact factors' and citation statistics have been developed to provide a better basis for inferring quality. The Foundation is currently considering the use of such metrics to track the performance of Foundation-supported researchers. Additional metrics are under consideration (e.g. Percentage of trainees completing advance degree studies; percentage of trainees continuing in mental health research; proportion of scholars achieving promotion; research awards for Foundation-supported work).

The Foundation will commit to developing a set of metrics (quantitative and qualitative) and monitoring the development of similar metrics by other granting agencies. In this manner we may evolve a better basis for comparison and determination of return on investment.

The Foundation will implement or enhance the following activities, to increase its impact in the mental health sector over the next three years:

- Increase the number of applications for grants and fellowships, particularly from traditionally under-represented Northern institutions;
- Develop additional opportunities for support of young mental health researchers;
- Increase the number of mental health research reports held in the "Virtual Library" available to the public, policy makers, and other mental health researchers;
- Develop and implement knowledge translation and exchange strategies to provide mental health research findings to the citizens of Ontario;
- Work with the ministry to arrange MOHLTC Research to Policy Dialogue events focused on priority mental health topics;
- Track significant professional development activities (e.g. roundtables, workshops, training sessions, etc.) led by OMHF funded researchers that are aimed at building capacity to produce policy-oriented research/outcomes;
- Collect information about collaborations (co-applications, joint projects, etc.) with researchers, decision-makers and/or knowledge users (e.g. health care practitioners, patients/patient associations, not-for-profit/advocacy organizations, industry, etc.);
- Report on the types of conferences/forums/symposiums/ workshops OMHF funded researchers participated in; and,
- Report on research productivity and strategic value that highlights impacts on health services/systems changes, and/or population health.